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Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 1, 7-8, 98, 111-112, 115, 118, 131, 141, 143-144, 146-147, 155, 170-171, 176-178, 186, 190, 192-194, 202-203 and 216-220 are allowed.

Reasons for Allowance

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Prior art of record fails to teach the claimed invention of independent claims 1, 98, 141, 116, 176, 194, 216, and their dependent claims. These claims are allowed in view of applicants' arguments presented in the appeal brief filed on March 29, 2007.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Romain Jeanty whose telephone number is (571) 272-6732. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30 am to 6:00 pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bradley Bayat can be reached on (571) 272-6704. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Romain Jeanty/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3624
October 14, 2008